



## Section 2 Land Use

### Purpose

The future land use component of the Hanover County Comprehensive Plan serves as a guide for future land development. Different land use designations are depicted geographically on the *General Land Use Plan* map which reflects the desire to encourage compatibility of different uses, ensure efficient infrastructure development, and to preserve natural and cultural resources.

*The General Land Use Plan designations are not intended to be site specific, but are to be used as a guide for zoning deliberations so that changes are consistent with the long range plan for the County.*

The General Land Use Plan designations are not intended to be site specific, but are to be used as a guide for zoning deliberations so that changes are consistent with the long range plan for the County. The Zoning District Map of Hanover County, Virginia, is the official map of zoning classification by individual parcel. The General Land Use Plan map does not change a parcel's zoning classification, nor does it impact continuation of existing legal land uses or other uses permitted by existing zoning.

Amendments to the Zoning District Map, and the provisions that regulate the zoning district uses should be consistent with the guidelines specified in the Comprehensive Plan, including the land use designations shown on the General Land Use Plan map and detailed in this section.

The General Land Use Plan complements the goal of maintaining the independent but harmonious balance between the suburban and rural areas of the County as stated in Section 1, Growth Management. This is achieved by directing higher residential densities and more intensive non-residential uses to the designated Suburban Service Area (SSA) while encouraging uses intended to maintain the character and agricultural integrity into the rural area. The suburban area is identified as properties located within the defined boundaries of the SSA and the rural area being properties outside the SSA.

This section addresses the goals, objectives and strategies for the rural and suburban areas striving to reflect the different attributes that contribute to the distinct environments and characteristics of each.

### Rural Area



#### Goal

Hanover County will continue to be recognized for a vibrant rural environment that is characterized by the following:

- < Viable agricultural and forestal resources that are important components of the local economy
- < Communities of spacious low density residential development within the rural planning area that is reflective of a rural character
- < Business and employment hubs that serve the needs of the rural community
- < Preserved natural, cultural, and historical resources

#### Objectives

- < Provide distinctive land use designations strategically located outside the SSA that are intended to maintain agricultural and forestal integrity
- < Provide opportunities for commercial and residential development that complement and preserve the rural and cultural characteristics of the area
- < Continue to utilize zoning techniques which encourage the preservation of open space, agricultural, forestal, cultural, historic features and environmentally sensitive areas

Map Color:

White

### Agricultural Land Use



A major portion of the area outside of the Suburban Service Area is designated for agricultural use where provision of public water and sewer service is not planned. Appropriate uses would be farming, forestry, Agricultural Forestal Districts, public or semi-public uses that serve the community, large lot single-family residential development (single lots or subdivisions), and residential cluster development consisting of both residential and conservation areas. Overall residential density in the Agricultural area cannot exceed a density of one unit per ten acres by-right or generally no greater than one unit per 6.25 acres with an approved rezoning; lots as small as two acres in area may be created for family homesteads and in limited instances on smaller parcels.

**Compatible Zoning Districts: A-1, RC, AR-6, A-1 Cluster** (in areas shown as Rural Conservation on the *Growth Management, Conservation and Suburban Development Plan* map)

### Strategies

- < Identify productive agricultural and forest land based on recent soil and forest surveys
- < Encourage the preservation of prime and important agricultural and forest lands whenever possible through techniques such as the designation of Agricultural and Forestal District (AFD) or dedication of Conservation Easements and Open Space Easements
- < Encourage the use of clustering techniques for residential development to protect the rural character and cultural resources, preserve open space, enhance agricultural/forest opportunities and reduce the loss of prime and important soils to development
- < Achieve quality rural residential neighborhoods by encouraging site and subdivision layouts that are sensitive to existing topography and land forms. Ensure provisions for adequate and safe vehicular access to thoroughfares

### Rural Village Land Use

Map Color:



The Rural Village designated land use is for commercial uses that provide necessary services for the surrounding rural community and for compatible rural residential development. New development should be appropriate in scale and designed to complement the unique character of the designated village area. Villages are also characterized by low density residential development situated on smaller lots within and in close proximity to the designated Rural Village.

**Compatible Zoning Districts:** Consideration should be given to the creation of a unique zoning district that recognizes the need to provide for a varied mix of low intensity commercial and low density residential uses commonly found within Rural Villages that evolve naturally over time.

### Strategies

- < Maintain a sense of place and unique character in the designated village areas. New development should complement the existing community with regard to scale, architecture, materials, color, and texture
- < Promote economic development and historic preservation by encouraging the reuse of historic structures for local businesses
- < Encourage a mix of uses, including neighborhood commercial, residential, as well as churches and other civic buildings
- < Ensure provision of adequate and safe vehicular access to thoroughfares
- < Examine the benefits of a new zoning district that allows for an integration of uses, multiple uses in one structure, and flexibility in standard regulations governing setbacks and parking through design standards unique to the zoning district





### Rural Commercial Node Land Use

Map Color:



The Commercial and Business Industrial designations located outside the Suburban Service Area are typically small nodes of commercial activity serving the local population. These rural commercial nodes are typically located at road intersections and are scaled to complement the character of the existing community.

**Compatible Zoning Districts: B-O, B-1, B-2, B-3**

### **Strategies**

- < Support uses that provide the rural community with convenient retail, service, and employment opportunities scaled to meet the needs of the local community
- < Ensure provision of adequate and safe vehicular access to thoroughfares
- < Ensure land uses are harmonious with surrounding uses and transition appropriately
- < Ensure new structures are compatible and scaled to complement the character of the existing community

### Suburban Service Area



#### Goal

Hanover County's designated Suburban Service Area will be a premier suburban community characterized by the following:

- < Compact and contiguous development that maximizes the efficient use of public facilities
- < Convenient and safe accessibility to homes, services and employment centers
- < Sustainable building development through the use of energy efficient technologies and quality building materials
- < A variety of housing options that meet the demands of a developing workforce and satisfies population demand trends
- < A suburban community with viable business/employment centers that attract and retain businesses
- < A community with a diverse local economy that provides an expanding tax base and employment opportunities for its citizens
- < A suburban environment with abundant open space that is appropriately located and designed to provide opportunities for preservation of cultural resources and for active and passive recreation

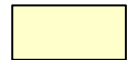
### Objectives

- ◀ Provide distinctive land use designations strategically located inside the SSA that are intended to provide opportunities for residential and non-residential development that is convenient and safe, conducive to viable business/employment centers, and designed to meet the diverse housing needs of changing population demographics
- ◀ Provide opportunities for commercial, industrial and residential development to occur in a compact and contiguous manner that maximizes existing and planned infrastructure
- ◀ Continue to utilize zoning techniques which encourage open space and sensitive environmental and historic features

### Suburban Transitional Land Use

**(1-2 dwelling unit per acre density)**

Map Color:



The Suburban Transitional designated land use includes attached and detached single family dwelling residential development. This designation is intended to accommodate the housing expectations and changing trends for existing residents and projected population increases through flexible lot sizing, provision of recreational areas, and preservation of open space.

**Compatible Zoning Districts: RS**

### Suburban General Land Use

**(1-4 dwelling unit per acre density)**

Map Color:



The Suburban General designated land use includes attached and detached single family dwelling residential development and self-contained mixed-use development within the Suburban Service Area. This designation is intended to accommodate the housing expectations and changing trends for existing residents and projected population increases through flexible lot sizing, variable density, provision of recreational areas, and preservation of open space.

**Compatible Zoning Districts: RS (B-1, BO may be considered when immediately adjacent to an existing non-residential land use designation)**



## Land Use



### Suburban High Land Use

Map Color:



**(4-8 dwelling unit per acre density)**

The Suburban High designated land use includes attached and detached homes, townhomes, multi-family development and self-contained mixed-use

within the Suburban Service Area. This designation is intended to accommodate the housing expectations and changing trends for existing residents and projected population increases through flexible lot sizing, variable density, provision of recreational areas, and preservation of open space.

**Compatible Zoning Districts: RS, RM, MX**

### Multi-Family Land Use

Map Color:



**(8-15 dwelling unit per acre density; maximum of 15 dwelling units per acre within a self-contained Mixed Use zoning development)**

The Multi-Family designated land use includes townhouses, multi-family development and self-contained mixed-use development within the Suburban Service Area. This designation is intended to accommodate the housing expectations and changing trends for existing residents and projected population increases through flexible lot sizing, variable density, provision of recreational areas, and preservation of open space.

**Compatible Zoning Districts: RM, MX**

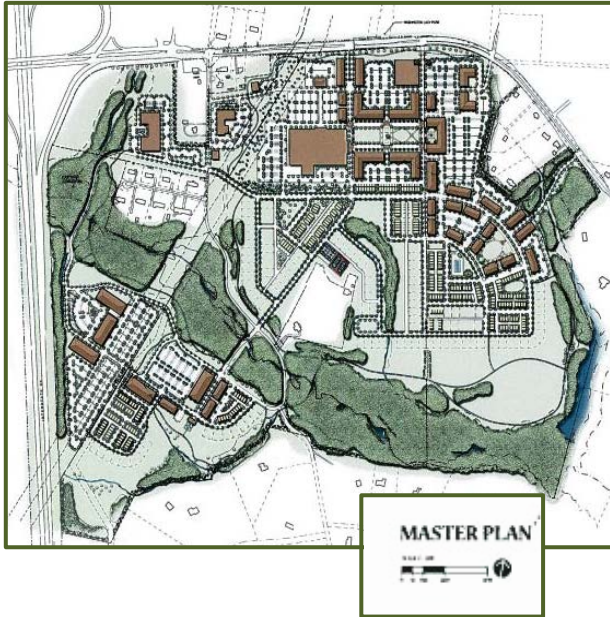
### Residential Land Use Strategies

- < Achieve quality neighborhoods by encouraging the use of high quality construction techniques and material
- < Promote the interconnection of communities to enhance vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian circulation and reduce demand along existing and proposed thoroughfares
- < Ensure provision of adequate and safe vehicular access to thoroughfares
- < Ensure provision of contiguous open space designed for passive and active recreation that is conveniently and centrally located for residents, and encourage the preservation of cultural resources and environmental features such as wetlands and Resource Protection Areas, scenic viewsheds, and existing trees/vegetation
- < Ensure land uses are harmonious with surrounding uses and residential density and non-residential uses should transition appropriately to adjoining uses
- < Promote variation in building elevations through diverse but complementary architectural forms, materials, colors, and texture
- < Strive for efficient land use and utilization of public utilities by supporting densities at the higher end of the recommended ranges
- < Mixed-use developments which provide a wide range of housing types and greater densities, to better address the needs of the County's citizens and should be designed to fit into the fabric of the community while creating a separate "sense of place" for the specific project. Incorporation of these developments into the neighborhood at large should be accomplished through extension of existing roads, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and connections of open spaces
- < Policies and ordinances should be evaluated to assure that the maximum achievable residential density under any zoning district is 15 units per acre

Map Color:



### Multi-Use Land Use



The Multi-Use designated land use is for a master planned community characterized by employment intensive uses including office and business parks, professional offices, retail uses, and limited industrial. The master plan for the community should follow the conceptual plan requirements of the various zoning districts where applicable, and in addition to the ordinance requirements, the master plan should be evaluated against the criteria set forth below. In addition, when a particular zoning district does not have a conceptual plan requirement, development of a detailed conceptual plan incorporating the desired design elements should be encouraged.

Although local retail is not intended to be the exclusive non-residential use, it is recognized that retail is an important component to support the overall community. Retail may also include service establishments as well as restaurants. The purpose of master planning a multi-use project is to ensure the arrangement of land uses are integrated into an attractive and functional development. Consideration of projects smaller than 20 acres should be discouraged unless ancillary to a larger development, while the assemblage of such parcels should be encouraged to lessen the likelihood of road stripping and inefficient extension of public facilities necessary to support the project.

Residential uses may be incorporated, but not required, into a multi-use development. It is generally expected that the residential component of such a community would include a variety of housing types, including single family detached, single family attached, and multi-family dwellings. Within a multi-use development, the area zoned for residential uses generally should not exceed 65% of the total area of the development. The maximum density for the multi-family residential component of the project shall be no greater than 15 dwelling units per acre. Density shall be calculated only upon that portion of the project devoted to residential use.

**Compatible Zoning Districts: RS, RM, MX, O-S, B-O, B-1, B-2, B-3, BP, M-1**

### Multi-Use Land Use Strategies

- < Ensure land uses are harmonious with surrounding uses; residential density and non-residential uses should transition appropriately to adjoining uses
- < Ensure provision of an integrated transportation system to accommodate motorized and non-motorized methods of transportation including roads, bicycle lanes, sidewalks, pedestrian paths, and walking trails comprehensively interconnecting all proposed uses within the project and where appropriate, with the surrounding areas
- < Ensure provision of adequate and safe vehicular access to thoroughfares
- < Promote distinction in commercial building elevations through architectural form and use of durable building materials
- < Promote variation in building elevations through diverse but complementary architectural forms, materials, and colors
- < Achieve quality neighborhoods by encouraging the use of quality construction materials and techniques
- < Ensure provision of contiguous open space designed for passive green space areas and active recreation that is conveniently and centrally located for residential and non-residential uses, and encourage the preservation of cultural resources and environmental features such as wetlands and Resource Protection Areas, scenic viewsheds, and existing trees/vegetation
- < Ensure land uses are harmonious with surrounding uses; residential density and non-residential uses should transition appropriately to adjoining uses
- < Ensure provision of adequate and safe vehicular access to thoroughfares
- < Promote distinction in commercial building elevations through architectural form and use of durable building materials

### Multi-Use Land Use Strategies, Cont'd.

- < Promote variation in building elevations through diverse but complementary architectural forms, materials, and colors
- < Achieve quality neighborhoods by encouraging the use of quality construction materials and techniques
- < Ensure provision of contiguous open space designed for passive green space areas and active recreation that is conveniently and centrally located for residential and non-residential uses, and encourage the preservation of cultural resources and environmental features such as wetlands and Resource Protection Areas, scenic viewsheds, and existing trees/vegetation
- < To the extent practical, environmental and cultural resources should be integrated into the community as an amenity to enhance aesthetics and for the passive enjoyment of residents and employees
- < Design Mixed-use developments to provide a wide range of housing types with higher densities, to address the changing needs of future residents of the County
- < Mixed-use developments should be designed to fit into the fabric of the community while creating a separate “sense of place” for the specific project. Incorporation of these developments into the neighborhood at large should be accomplished through extension of existing roads, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and connections of open spaces
- < Project phasing shall be done in a manner that ensures the primary emphasis of this designation is business and professional uses. This shall be done through an appropriate balance of residential and business or professional construction within a master planned development, and establishing the residential development shall not disproportionately precede business or professional development within a project.
- < Policies and ordinances should be evaluated to assure that the maximum achievable residential density under any zoning district is 15 units per acre

### Commercial Land Use

Map Color:



The Commercial designated land use is for commercial development throughout the County that serves citizens safely and conveniently with differing levels of business activities. The designation is intended for retail shopping and personal service uses to be developed either as a unit or on individual parcels to serve a relatively small area, a community of several neighborhoods or a wide area of the County or region. Commercial areas are generally located along major arterial and collector roads and at the junctions of major thoroughfares. Self-contained Mixed Use zoning development is appropriate for the Commercial designation with residential density not exceeding 15 dwelling units per acre.

**Compatible Zoning Districts: O-S, B-O, B-1, B-2, B-3, MX**

### Destination Commerce Land Use

Map Color:



The Destination Commerce designated land use is for commercial uses that are regional in scope and unique in character, dependent on Interstate visibility and access, and drawing from an area far beyond the boundaries of the County and Richmond Region for clients and customers.

Accessory uses to Destination Commerce would include restaurants, hotels, service stations, convenience stores, and other uses that serve and complement the destination commerce development. A project that seeks to utilize sign provisions specific to Destination Commerce must be a unified development of at least one hundred (100) acres consisting primarily of Destination Commerce uses and ancillary commercial uses.



**Compatible Zoning Districts: B-1, B-2, B-3, M-1, and M-2**



## Land Use

### Planned Business Land Use

Map Color:



The Planned Business designated land use generally consists of areas fifty (50) acres or more, which are master planned, developed, and operated as integrated facilities for one or more business or limited industrial uses, with consideration to transportation facilities, circulation, parking, utilities, aesthetics, and compatibility with surrounding land uses. Projects should be comprised of limited industrial, office, institutional, and commercial uses, along with supporting residential development.

Self-contained Mixed Use zoning development is appropriate for the Planned Business designation with residential density not exceeding 15 dwelling units per acre. Properties consisting of 30 or fewer acres may be considered for BP zoning if the Board makes the finding that the property can meet the standards for such development. For properties which do not qualify for BP consideration, the OS may be considered.

**Compatible Zoning Districts: BP, MX, OS**

### Business-Industrial Land Use

Map Color:



The Business-Industrial designated land use is for business integrated with industrial that includes all commercial uses, offices and general light industry. Typical locations are along a major arterial or areas with convenient access to major thoroughfares. Higher standards are expected to mitigate impacts or complement the character of development in specified areas of the County.

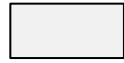
**Compatible Zoning Districts: BO, B-1, B-2, B-3, O-S, M-1, M-2 and BP**

## Land Use



### Limited Industrial Land Use

Map Color:



The Limited Industrial designated land use category is for business and manufacturing that includes general light industry, transportation terminals, warehousing, and similar low-intensity uses and relatively free from offensive uses. Locations typically provide access to major thoroughfares. Higher standards are expected to mitigate

impacts or complement the character of development in specified areas of the County. Certain commercial uses would be permitted, primarily for the service of employees in the district.

**Compatible Zoning Districts: BP, OS, M-1, and M-2**

### Industrial Land Use

Map Color:



The Industrial designated land use is for a full range of industrial uses that takes into consideration the existing and future character of the area. These industrial centers should be located near major thoroughfares to facilitate the movement of goods.

**Compatible Zoning Districts: M-1, M-2, M-3**

### Commercial and Industrial Land Use Strategies

- ◀ Ensure land uses are harmonious with surrounding uses; intensity of commercial and industrial uses should be evaluated to assure the appropriate transition of uses; where allowed with MX development, residential density should transition appropriately to adjoining uses
- ◀ Encourage distinction in building elevations through architectural form, building materials, color, and texture
- ◀ Encourage development of commercial corridors that are attractive and inviting for businesses through the use of landscaping, buffers and coherent, uniform signage free of visual clutter and confusion
- ◀ Support master planned development that includes harmonious architecture and landscaping and maintains higher standards
- ◀ Support development of attractive industrial or business parks where multiple businesses and industry can benefit from close proximity
- ◀ Ensure environmental quality and safety
- ◀ Encourage interconnectivity of adjoining commercial uses and maximize parking by encouraging shared or group parking areas
- ◀ Ensure provision of adequate and safe vehicular access to thoroughfares, and examine opportunities to consolidate access points to improve access
- ◀ Discourage the linear spread of commercial activities along thoroughfares in favor of identifiable planned commercial locations
- ◀ Support the development of regional commercial centers in close proximity to Interstate highway interchanges
- ◀ Support new planned neighborhood commercial districts that serve but do not conflict with surrounding residential areas

### Commercial and Industrial Land Use Strategies, Cont'd.

- < Encourage strong districts for commerce and services in existing urban locations, such as Ashland and Mechanicsville
- < Encourage redevelopment of older commercial centers
- < Identify opportunities and undertake studies to enhance the Route 30 corridor to provide visitors with an attractive tourist destination environment that is aesthetically pleasing and provides modern services and recreational activities
- < Actively direct industrial growth into areas that have the ability to accommodate characteristics unique to industrial development
- < Encourage appropriate uses in the Destination Commerce designation which require visibility and access from an interstate highway
- < When developments meet the characteristics defined for Destination Commerce, owner may develop attractive permissible highway signage consistent with the planned architecture for the development
- < Policies and ordinances should be evaluated to assure that the maximum achievable residential density under any zoning district is 15 units per acre
- < Support development that achieves the goals of the County's Economic Development Strategic Plan (The Economic Development Strategic Plan can be found at <http://www.hanovervirginia.com/>)
- < Create and implement strategies for the support and expansion of small businesses